

# Hospital Advisory Group Meeting

November 10, 1999

## Meeting Summary

**Next meeting: Thursday, February 24, 2000 1:00 p. m. IDEM Shadeland Offices - 2525 N. Shadeland Conference Room D - second floor**

- Lee Parsons with IDEM's Office of Land Quality gave a presentation on the universal waste rule and how it relates to the hazardous waste rules in Indiana. Mercury-containing items must, in most cases, be managed as hazardous wastes, unless you manage them as universal wastes. Generator Status and other issues come into play as you work through the rules. If you have specific questions, contact Dave Wintz for confidential assistance at (317) 233-1194 or call Lee Parsons of the Office of Land Quality at (317) 308-3109. Lee does not operate under the confidentiality mandate, but he does provide technical assistance.
- Paula Smith of IDEM's Compliance and Technical Assistance Program gave a presentation on mercury issues in Indiana. OPPTA wants to work with hospitals cooperatively to eliminate mercury from facilities. We discussed thermometer exchange programs and other issues related to the American Hospital Association/Environmental Protection Agency Memorandum of Understanding concerning mercury-free health care facilities. Our goal is to educate hospitals on mercury waste issues and the advantages of becoming virtually mercury-free. We also are asking for hospitals' help to educate the general public.
- Kevin Mouser with IUPUI and Clarian Health discussed mercury management. Clarian facilities are not totally mercury free yet, but they are working toward that goal. The merger of the hospitals in the Clarian system has caused delays. Kevin stressed that mercury assessments and elimination is a time-consuming process and education of all staff is key. There are some doctors that believe that mercury-containing thermometers are the only ones that should be used because of their accuracy.

Marc Olender from US EPA Region 5 spoke about the AHA/EPA memorandum of understanding. The workgroups are putting together documents that will help hospitals become virtually mercury free. Mercury is a priority for US EPA and the agency is looking forward to working with the states as they implement their programs.